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Hunza

exception of the doctor or visitors. There was a letter from my office awaiting me when I reached the Mir's palace. The Mir told me about it right after our first greeting. He was understanding enough to realize I would be happy to hear from home.

I guess many of the things about Hunza wouldn't allow the country to come under the heading of a democracy, but from what I saw of life and living in Hunza, I assure you it is more of a democracy than any other democracy in existence today.

Hunza has no policemen, no soldiers, no bureaucracy, no customs officers or immigration officers. They do have the Mir who is the ruler and true head of the state and the Mir appoints the Wazir who is his right hand man and acts as judge.

All major squabbles and disputes are handled by the Mir. He holds court regularly and makes the decisions and his word is law and cannot be challenged or contested by anyone. Minor cases are looked after and into and tried by the Wazir.

Hunza does not have a jail. There is no lockup whatsoever. If and when a crime is committed, the criminal or culprit is banished to a place called Shimshal. At Shimshal the criminal or guilty person is not confined or jailed. He just has to live in that rugged place, where living is grim. The altitude is somewhere around 12,000 or 13,000 feet, and eking an existence out of the land there is most difficult and precarious. Actually the form of punishment is a sort of ostracism.

Evidently the threat of being sentenced to live in Shimshal is a great deterrent, because few crimes are committed. There have only been two instances in the last ten years where serious crimes have occurred. In one instance it was a youth who had posted indecent signs on trees and other places. He was hailed before